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Ryle's "Intellectualist Legend" in Historical Context
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Gilbert Ryle's distinction between knowledge-*how* and knowledge-*that* emerged from his criticism of the "intellectualist legend" that to do something intelligently is "to do a bit of theory and then to do a bit of practice," and became a philosophical commonplace in the second half of the last century. In *this* century Jason Stanley (initially with Timothy Williamson) has attacked Ryle's distinction, arguing that "knowing-how is a species of knowing-that," and accusing Ryle of setting up a straw man in his critique of "intellectualism." Examining the use of the terms "intellectualism" and "anti-intellectualism" in the first half of the 20th century, in a wide-ranging debate in the social sciences as well as in philosophy, I show that Ryle was *not* criticizing a straw man, but a live historical position. In the context of this controversy, Ryle's position represents a third way between "intellectualism" and "anti-intellectualism," an option that has largely gone missing in the 21st century discussion. This argument illustrates how history can inform the history of philosophy, and how the history of philosophy can inform contemporary philosophical inquiry.

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Seventy years ago, Gilbert Ryle argued for a distinction between two kinds of knowledge, knowledge-how and knowledge-that, by attacking what he called "the prevailing doctrine" concerning "the logical behaviour of the several concepts of intelligence." According to this doctrine, "practical activities merit their titles 'intelligent,' 'clever,' and the rest only because they are accompanied by . . . internal acts of considering propositions (especially 'regulative propositions')" (Ryle 1945, 212).[1] Ryle associated this doctrine with a view about the relationship between his two forms of knowledge:

> Philosophers have not done justice to the distinction which is quite familiar to all of us between knowing that something is the case and knowing how to do things. In their theories of knowledge they concentrate on the discovery of truths or facts, and they ignore the discovery of ways and methods of doing things or else they try to reduce it to the discovery of facts. They assume that intelligence equates to the contemplation of propositions and is exhausted in this contemplation. (Ryle 1945, 215)

Ryle argued that "the prevailing doctrine leads to vicious regresses": intelligent acts must be backed by intelligent internal acts of considering regulative propositions, which in turn must be backed by further intelligent internal acts of considering meta-regulative propositions, and so on, *ad infinitum* (213).[2]

He labeled his target "the intellectualist legend" (217; also Ryle 1949, 27, 29, 30, 32), and his opponent, "the intellectualist (as I shall call him)" (Ryle 1945, 215). Ryle attributed to this nameless character a number of further moves in response to his arguments. The most important such move he called the "not unfashionable shuffle" of appealing to " 'implicit' but not 'explicit' knowledge of the rules" in order to block the regress. Ryle objected to this "shuffle" that it cannot explain why, even if someone explicitly acknowledged regulative propositions, they might still fail to perform intelligently (217).

But Ryle was not one to give sources, and his failure to name his target has led to serious misunderstanding of his philosophical position in the contemporary literature on the topic of knowing-how and knowing-that. Rectifying this problem is the main business of this paper, which will provide an object lesson in the value of a historical approach to philosophy for ongoing philosophical debate.

The fact that Ryle seems to *dub* his opponent "the intellectualist (as I will call him)" has led readers to see him as coining a term here, and stipulating its meaning. For example, Jeremy Fantl, in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* article on "Knowing How" writes: "The view that knowledge-how and knowledge-that are independent . . . is usually, *following Ryle*, called anti-intellectualism. The view that . . . to know how to do something is just to know the right sort of fact . . . is called intellectualism" (my emphasis). Fantl seems to take Ryle to have introduced both the terms "intellectualism" and "anti-intellectualism," and in the literature Ryle is constantly labeled an "anti-intellectualist." But this is historically far from the truth.

In fact, both terms were in widespread usage at the time of Ryle's writing, in the context of a decades-long debate concern-

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[1] I have left off the first part of his characterization of the doctrine, namely that "Intelligence is a special faculty . . . of thinking." This has not played much of a role in the contemporary discussion, and will not be discussed below.

[2] In "Knowing How and Knowing That" Ryle says that this form of the regress is "the turn of the argument I chiefly use," and it is also the one which has received the most attention in the literature. But he also mentions a more complex regress of "go-between" faculties which mediate between propositional thought and action. I will not discuss that regress here. In future work I hope to show how the history I will sketch also sheds light on it.

ing the nature of human motivation and action, spanning not only philosophy, but also psychology, economics, political science, and sociology. I will argue that Ryle's discussion of intelligence and knowing-how is best read against the background of this debate. As I read the history, Ryle would have viewed both "intellectualism" and "anti-intellectualism" as representing positions that shared, if sometimes covertly, a false view of the nature of reason, intelligence, and knowledge—*both* "intellectualists" and "anti-intellectualists" fell prey to the "intellectualist legend." Ryle is best seen, in this historical context, as seeking a middle way between intellectualism and anti-intellectualism. Moreover, this is not a merely historical point; appreciating this fact about the historical context of Ryle's thought makes it possible to grasp the real significance of his positive view in a way that has gone missing in much of the literature.

Thus, my claim is that the dispute about intellectualism and anti-intellectualism forms the background for Ryle's argument. My argument for this claim is not direct and textual. I will not cite places where Ryle explicitly addresses anti-intellectualists of his day or accuses them of having fallen into the same errors as intellectualists. The evidence for my claim is both historical and philosophical. On the historical side, I draw on facts such as these: the dispute between "intellectualists" and "anti-intellectualists" was very much in the air; Ryle owned books by both intellectualists and anti-intellectualists (both in philosophy and outside of it); one of his earliest influences, Giovanni Gentile, explicitly calls himself an anti-intellectualist; and so on.

On the philosophical side, I show that a careful reading of Ryle establishes what a Rylean response to the early 20th century anti-intellectualists would have to look like. Ryle does not use the term "anti-intellectualist," and, I argue, he would not have accepted this label as a description of his position. Ryle's own view, as we will see, is clearly different from that of both "intellectualists" and "anti-intellectualists" of his day. In *The Concept of*

Mind, Ryle makes clear that when a philosophical view is shown to rest on a category mistake, confusion will infect both sides of the dispute, arguing for example that when dualism is shown to be a myth, reductionism will fall with it, in both idealist and materialist forms (Ryle 1949, 22–23). Thus we should expect to find something similar in the case of intellectualism—exposing its confusions should equally undermine anti-intellectualism. Both positions involve, from Ryle's point of view, an impoverished conception of the different ways in which human action can be related to intelligence and reason. I argue that this illuminates Ryle's thought and makes clear how he would respond to the debate between intellectualists and anti-intellectualists.

By getting a clear view of the historical setting we will also be enabled to lay to rest a recurring concern, that Ryle's famous regress arguments target a "straw man."[3] In her 1951 review of *The Concept of Mind*, Suzanne Langer complains that Ryle "systematically evades rebuttal by naming no adversary," and

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[3]This worry already surfaced in one of the first responses to Ryle's 1945 essay, Ian Gallie's "Intelligence and Intelligent Conduct," read to the Aristotelian Society in 1948. Gallie set up a dilemma: either Ryle is attacking "the analytic proposition . . . that the intelligence of any practical act consists in or is reducible to the act's depending on an intelligent cognitive act," or the "synthetic proposition . . . that no practical act could as a matter of fact be intelligent unless it resulted from an intelligent cognitive act." He argued that in the first case Ryle's argument works, but only because its target is "so obviously silly as to be scarcely worth refuting" due to its blatantly circular character; whereas in the second case, Ryle's argument is "plausible but invalid" since the principle under consideration need not extend to cognitive acts. Gallie's argument on this second, "synthetic" horn of his dilemma presaged criticisms found first in Fodor and later in Stanley, which block the regress by positing "automatic mechanisms," non-intelligent sources for intelligent *cognitive* acts (Stanley 2011, 25). However, as we shall see, Ryle intends his "intellectualist" to hold something like Gallie's "obviously silly" analytic proposition, albeit not so explicitly and clearly as to make its obvious flaws apparent. Moreover, the examples provided by Bengson and Moffett of Frege, Cook Wilson, and Husserl, discussed briefly below, along with the cases of Stout and Stebbing examined in detail later in this essay, show that this attribution on Ryle's part can be supported from the writings of at least some actual philosophers.

"does not show any detailed knowledge of what other people really do think, or who holds to the 'legends' and 'traditions' he is exploding. . . . One can never even tell whether the nameless intellectualist whom Professor Ryle is demolishing is the Man in the Street, or is a real philosopher, someone of the calibre of Russell, Carnap, and Lewis" (147).[4] Twenty-first century readers of Ryle have shared this worry. A particularly important version of the straw man charge occurs in Jason Stanley's recent book *Know How* (2011).[5] According to Stanley, Ryle's regress argument begins from the premise that "the intellectualist view entails that 'for any operation to be intelligently executed', there must be a prior consideration of a proposition" (12). Stanley objects that this attributes to Ryle's opponent the "manifestly absurd" idea that "all intelligent actions are preceded by distinct actions of self-avowals of propositions." Therefore, "if Ryle intended his target to be one that makes the first premise true by definition, . . . he will have fallen well short of his goal of refuting anything but a straw man position" (14).

Like Langer, Stanley cannot imagine whom Ryle might have been targeting with his criticism. However, Ryle did have some "high-caliber philosophers" in mind. As we shall see, positions very much like that of Ryle's "intellectualist" were held, in print, by such thinkers as G. F. Stout and Susan Stebbing. Furthermore, I will argue, Ryle's discussion of intellectualism should be read against the background of a wide-ranging discourse about intellectualism and anti-intellectualism spanning the human sciences. In what follows, in addition to the intellectualists Stout and Stebbing, I will focus on two figures, though I could easily have expanded this list: William McDougall—one of "the two great dynamists in psychology" along with Freud, according to a 1952 *History of American Psychology* (Roback 1952,

253)—and the political scientist Graham Wallas, co-founder of the London School of Economics. McDougall figures as the main anti-intellectualist in this story, whereas Wallas begins as a second anti-intellectualist, influenced by McDougall, but moves to the position of an intellectualist critic of McDougall. That Ryle himself might have been influenced by this debate can be inferred from the fact that a number of the works I will discuss, including books by Stout, Stebbing, McDougall, and Wallas, are in the collection that Ryle donated to Linacre College Library upon his retirement in 1968.[6]

The main work of this essay will be to lay out some of this historical context. I lack the space here to do full justice to the controversy over intellectualism and anti-intellectualism in the first half of the 20th century. But I will try to give a flavor of the debate and its broader cultural stakes, as well as to show how the debate was infected by crucial confusions between conceptual and empirical issues that Ryle would be concerned to keep clear of one another. I will argue that Ryle's own position can be seen as responding to this broader debate, and that, within that context, his work represents both an advance and a genuinely new approach—an approach that cannot be fully understood without taking that context into account.

Before entering into this history in detail, however, I should note one place in the literature where something like the questions I am raising in this paper are briefly addressed. John Bengson and Marc A. Moffett, in a footnote to their introductory essay to the 2011 collection *Knowing How*, make a first stab at identifying Ryle's nameless "intellectualist." They write that "an intellectualist perspective was . . . espoused, albeit in perhaps less blatant forms, by several of Ryle's more immediate

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[4]This is just a sampling of Langer's delightfully vitriolic rant, which occupies almost a full page of her review.

[5]Other recent examples include Carter (2012, 750) and Gottlieb (2015, 7).

[6]I thank Fiona Richardson, librarian of Linacre College, for allowing me unfettered access to the books donated by Ryle to the College library. The books marked with a '*' in the references are found in this collection. I discuss Ryle's annotations in these books (or the absence of annotations when that is the case) in notes below.

influences," citing Frege, Cook Wilson, and Husserl (10 n. 13). These three sources are all plausible examples of philosophers more or less within the target range of Ryle's critique, and each was particularly important to Ryle—Ryle described himself in his early years at Oxford as a "fidgetty Cook Wilsonian" (Ryle 1968, 105), made a close study of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, and engaged repeatedly with Frege's writings.

The passage from Frege to which Bengson and Moffett refer is from "The Thought" and occurs in a discussion of how a thought "acts" by "being grasped and taken to be true." Frege concludes that "our actions are usually prepared by thinking and judgment" (1918, 310; 76–77 in the original German). This suggests an "empirical" intellectualism about the *typical* source of motivation in human action, but not Ryle's target *conceptual* principle about the *nature* of *intelligent* action. Cook Wilson comes closer to that target, and seems a plausible source for the idea of the "not unfashionable shuffle," since he argues that "certain principles exist implicitly in our minds and actuate us in particular thoughts and actions." While he never explicitly mentions intelligence concepts, he appears to make a conceptual, not an empirical claim, when he asserts that "it seems absurd to say that a person who is distinguished for his justice does not know what is just . . . we know the just man *has* a principle . . . the principle lives for him only in its application in particular cases" (1926, 43).

Bengson and Moffett do not give an explicit reference to Husserl, citing the *Logical Investigations* as a whole, but in personal correspondence Bengson conveyed to me both a general sense that "the *Logical Investigations* is animated by a broadly intellectualist view, which becomes explicit at specific moments," and provided a number of passages to support this.[7] Several of

these passages discuss issues of solipsism, communication and understanding that generally concerned Ryle in *The Concept of Mind*, and Bengson is surely right to see Husserl as one of Ryle's targets in that book. But in one passage in particular Husserl endorses explicitly the kind of intellectualism attacked by Ryle in his discussion of knowing how. In terms strikingly similar to those used by G. F. Stout in a passage to be discussed below (see note 16), Husserl describes human intelligence as going beyond perception and experience through the use of conceptual thought, thereby allowing us to foresee future events and "dominate them practically" by calculating the consequences of our possible actions (Husserl 1922, vol. 1, 199).[8]

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[7]In correspondence, Bengson also provided a nice quotation from Josiah Royce with a strong intellectualist flavor, in which Royce speaks of assertions and opinions as "coach[ing] the active will as to how to do its deed," and calls

our "intelligent deeds" the "workings" of our opinions "which translate our opinions into life" (1912, 112). Similarly, H. H. Price writes that "intellectual activity is, as it were, included in practical activity as an essential element. We 'control' our action by recognition of the circumstances, by the thought of a plan or principle which we are seeking to realize in or by the action, and by the apprehension of certain alternative ways of realizing it. There is no such thing as unintelligent action. *Das Thun ist auch Denken*" (1933, 14). Examples such as this certainly help to show that Ryle was not wrong to see intellectualism as a live, even dominant philosophical position. But as with the references to Frege, Cook Wilson, and Husserl, I think they are best understood within the context of the larger story I will tell.

[8]Copies of Husserl's *Logical Investigations* and Frege's "The Thought" (both in the original German) were among the books that Ryle donated to the Linacre College library. Both were annotated by Ryle. Ryle's annotations to "The Thought" primarily concern Frege's doctrine of the "Third Realm," his argument for the undefinability of truth, and his doctrine of sense, reference, and judgment. Some annotations impinge on Ryle's concerns in *The Concept of Mind*; for example, on p. 66, Ryle notes "Things, public" and "'ideas' private" next to Frege's discussion of the "inner world" of ideas. On p. 77, immediately after the passage cited by Bengson and Moffett, Ryle placed a small "x" in the margin next to Frege's remark that communication of thoughts happens when "one brings about changes in the common outside world which, perceived by another person, are supposed to induce him to apprehend a thought and take it to be true" (310 in the English translation)—a passage which expresses the target of Ryle's discussion of understanding in *The Concept of Mind*.

Ryle's copy of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* is copiously annotated. I was unable to make a careful study of all his annotations. But I can report that

These examples provided by Bengson and Moffett represent a good start towards answering our question. But as far as Bengson and Moffett tell us, these may just be isolated instances within Ryle's particular influences. The history I will provide in the rest of this essay paints a bigger picture and explains more clearly why Ryle thought he could speak of "the intellectualist" without naming his sources, and expect to be understood.

Yet, this same history raises a different question: why did Ryle think of the "intellectualist legend" as the "prevailing doctrine"? To make this question pressing, I'll begin with some semi-popular, non-philosophical writing from just before the Second World War. In the introduction to a collection of short essays titled *Ideas are Weapons*, Max Lerner, former editor of *The Nation* and, at the time, professor of political science at Williams College (Severo 1992) writes that "the intellectual revolution of the twentieth century is likely to prove the charting of the *terra incognita* of the irrational and the extraction of its implications for every area of human thought" (1943, 4). Twice in the volume he provides lengthy, partially overlapping lists of writers who contributed to what he calls "the revolt against reason" in the first part of the century.[9] In addition to Wallas and McDougall,

he names Bergson, Sorel, Pareto, Nietzsche, Le Bon, Tarde, Trotter, Martin, Lawrence, Spengler, and Freud, "as well as a host of lesser siblings." These figures represent "a revolt against a false rationalism and intellectualism in the study of the political animal." They share a "loose and ramshackle instinct psychology," and a "sense of how blind or stupid or animal-like the masses of men are when they vote or fight or unite to revolt." At the same time, Lerner noted that "an attempt to reconcile a current of intellectualism with a current of anti-intellectualism pervades the whole school of social psychology" (315, 351).

This is what the intellectual world looked like to a political scientist writing at the advent of the Second World War: a struggle between "a current of intellectualism" and a "current of anti-intellectualism" dominated the scene, with, in addition, an ongoing "attempt to reconcile" these two currents. Moreover—as one might expect given the time this book was published—the whole debate was heavily freighted with political significance. In his introductory essay, Lerner included Adolf Hitler in another list of figures from "the story of this exploration of the irrational" (4). In an essay on "Hitler as a Thinker" written especially for the volume, he stated that Bergson and Spengler unconsciously prepared the ground for Hitler (361). So-called "anti-intellectualism" was in fact widely blamed both for the horrors of the First World War and the rise of Fascist and Communist anti-democratic regimes in the period between the wars.

Ryle would have known of this political dimension of the struggle between "intellectualism" and "anti-intellectualism." Looking back in 1970, he reported that "in 1924 I spent some time acquiring a reading knowledge of Italian and a modest grasp of Italian philosophy by reading some Croce, but more Gentile . . . "

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on the page where Husserl expresses an intellectualist view of intelligence (195 in the German), Ryle made no annotation at all. His annotations on the preceding pages do not concern the topics of intelligence or intellectualism. Nonetheless, given Ryle's extremely careful reading of Husserl's works, it would be surprising if he did not note the flavor of intellectualism discerned by Bengson there. (Ryle also made no annotation in his copy of Stout's *Manual of Psychology*, on the page which I use below to provide an example of intellectualist thought.)

[9]The phrase "the revolt against reason" was used repeatedly in this period to describe "anti-intellectualist" currents of thought and their political and ethical dangers. I discuss below a chapter of Ralph Barton Perry's 1918 *The Present Conflict of Ideas* with this title. Among other instances, in 1935, Bertrand Russell published a paper with the same title, later republished as "The Ancestry of Fascism"; and the second-last chapter of Karl Popper's 1945 *The Open Society and its Enemies* was titled "Oracular Philosophy and the Revolt against Reason." Both Russell and Popper saw this "revolt against reason" as the root

of totalitarian philosophies and traced its source in modern thought to post-Kantian idealism—Russell pinning the blame primarily on Fichte, and Popper on Hegel. (I do not mean to endorse these claims, of course. For discussion of the context and significance of such politically motivated intellectual histories, see Akehurst 2010.)

(Ryle 1970, 3).[10] Ryle later obtained a copy of Giovanni Gentile's *The Theory of Mind as Pure Act* in English translation; in its final chapter Gentile argues that his form of idealism embraces both "true intellectualism," and a "true anti-intellectualism" which is neither voluntarism nor mysticism. Within a few years, Gentile would become an apologist for Mussolini, writing in *The Spectator* that "the condemnation of intellectualism may be said to have become the common denominator of all Fascist literature" (1928, 37).[11]

For this reason alone, Ryle might not have wanted to be called an "anti-intellectualist," especially after the close of a brutal war against Fascism.[12] Furthermore, Ryle's long-standing view that

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[10]See Connelly (2014) for discussion of Gentile's reception in Britain.

[11]For more on Gentile's relation to fascism, see Adamson (2012).

[12]As a young man Ryle saw Mussolini on a trip to Italy, and had at least a somewhat favorable impression of him. Linacre College library holds a postcard from Ryle to his mother, dated 27 March 1924, with a picture of Mussolini seated on a horse. Ryle's message begins: "This is the general of the Fascists. He made a speech which we c– not understand. I am beginning to think better of Mussolini." However, by the end of the Second World War, after serving for five years in military intelligence, Ryle's opinion of Mussolini must have changed decisively. One can infer how this would have affected his view of Gentile from an anecdote told by G. A. Cohen about his evaluation of Heidegger: "I once asked Ryle whether he had continued to study Heidegger after he had written a long review of *Being and Time* in *Mind*. Ryle's reply: 'No, because when the Nazis came to power, Heidegger showed himself to be a shit from the heels up, and a shit from the heels up can't do good philosophy'" (Cohen 2013, 104 n. 22). Confirmation that Ryle might have taken a similarly jaundiced view of Gentile as a philosopher can be drawn from his 1947 review of Popper's *The Open Society and its Enemies*, in which he wrote that it was not "news to philosophers that Nazi, Fascist and Communist doctrines are descendants of the Hegelian gospel" (171). The obvious line of inheritance from Hegelianism to (Italian) Fascism (as distinct from Nazism) would pass through the self-identified idealist, Gentile.

Nonetheless, Ryle was clearly influenced by Gentile for a time, as can be seen from annotations referring to Gentile in some of the books by other authors in his library. Moreover the influence may have gone deeper and lasted longer. For example, in his copy of Gentile's *The Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, Ryle highlighted the following passage: "Mind according to our theory is act or

"there is no place for isms in philosophy" (Ryle 1937, 153) would have led him to want to disclaim any label then in current use. In addition, as noted above, Ryle held that when a philosophical position was shown to rest on a category mistake, both proponents and opponents of the position could be expected to suffer from the same confusions; and we should expect this to apply to the intellectualism/anti-intellectualism dispute as much as to the dualism/monism dispute.

This last point can help us to answer the question raised above: why, given the history sketched by Lerner, of which he was well aware, did Ryle call the "prevailing doctrine," "intellectualism," rather than "anti-intellectualism"? My suggestion is that, from Ryle's point of view, both the "intellectualists" and the "anti-intellectualists" of his day should ultimately be seen as ... *intellectualists*! They shared a common assumption, for which I will borrow a useful phrase from Alva Noë (2013): "the over-intellectualizing of the intellect." In part, this is the assumption that Jason Stanley took to be "manifestly absurd"—the assumption that "all intelligent actions are preceded by distinct actions of self-avowals of propositions." The historical story unfolded below will lead us to a more precise statement of this assumption, namely that human action is motivated in one of three ways: either it stems from some non-rational factor such as instinct or emotion; or it is the result of a non-rational automatism produced by habit; or it is guided by explicit intellectual thought. On some views current at the time—corresponding directly to the assumption that Stanley calls "manifestly absurd"—only the last can be called "intelligent," whereas for others, both the second and the third exhibit a kind of intelligence (learning from experience)—although only the third exhibits full rational-

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process, not substance. It is very different from the concept of mind in the old spiritualistic doctrine. That theory in opposing mind to matter materialized mind" (1922, 20). (Ryle underlined the first sentence and marked the third sentence with a side-bar in the margin.) We can see here and elsewhere in Gentile's works the seeds of some of the main ideas of *The Concept of Mind*.

ity. For Ryle, however, all such views leave out altogether the kinds of "intelligent powers" that are acquired in learning a skill, and are manifested in what he calls knowledge-how. They ignore manifestations of human rationality—reason*ableness*—that do not depend on reason*ing*.

This assumption—explicit in some and implicit in others—lies behind the debate about exactly *how* "blind or stupid or animal-like the masses of men are," as Lerner puts it. It shapes views about what it *means* to be "blind and stupid and animal-like," and so what it means to be "intelligent," "clever," and the rest. Contra Stanley, Ryle *does* attribute such an assumption to his unnamed "intellectualists." But, I will argue, the *so-called* "anti-intellectualists" with which Ryle was familiar were guilty of the same or similar assumptions. These too are therefore targeted by his attack.

With these preliminaries behind us, we turn to some history, beginning in the late 19th century. In William James's 1890 *Principles of Psychology*, "intellectualism" was opposed to "sensationalism," with these two terms functioning as labels for epistemological rationalism and empiricism (vol. 1, 245). Over the course of the next two decades, however, things changed. By 1910, John Dewey could speak of "the shift of meaning that the term 'intellectualism' is even now undergoing" (477). Intellectualism had come to be contrasted with "voluntarism" and linked to "a false estimate of the place of knowledge in experience." A new kind of "anti-intellectualist" had emerged, for whom the "vice of intellectualism is . . . a false abstraction of knowledge (and the logical) from its working context" (478–79). For this new kind of "anti-intellectualist," the "intellectualists" would include *both* traditional rationalists and empiricists.

The details of this epistemological development are not important to our story, so I will be brief. Three names were most prominently associated with "anti-intellectualism" in philosophy in the early 20th century: Henri Bergson, William James,

and John Dewey. In his 1907 *Creative Evolution*,[13] Bergson characterized his philosophy as a rejection of "the relation established by pure intellectualism between the theory of knowledge and the theory of the known, between metaphysics and science" (Bergson 1911, 194). He distinguished "intelligence" from "instinct," arguing that instinct gives knowledge of objects, while intelligence can only give knowledge of relations (136ff, 147, 149). Scientific knowledge, the product of intelligence, falsifies continuous phenomena like time, and organic unities such as living things, since it requires analyzing them into parts and recombining those parts by relating them together (157, 165). These limitations of intelligence and science are overcome by raising "instinct" to "intuition," in which instinct transcends intelligence by becoming "disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely" (176–78).

Bergson's philosophy was extremely influential, and attracted the support of William James, who saw it as hospitable to his own brand of voluntarist pragmatism. In his 1909 *A Pluralistic Universe*, James credited Bergson with having "killed intellectualism definitively and without hope of recovery" (215). This situation prompted Bertrand Russell to write in the same year that "an *intellectualist*, by the way, is anyone who is not a pragmatist" (Russell 1909, 101).[14] By 1914 the terms "intellectualism" and "anti-intellectualism" had obtained such wide currency in the philosophical discourse that Walter Pitkin of Columbia University could write of "James and Schiller, not to mention every other person who loves that blessed word Anti-intellectualism" (Pitkin 1914, 303). In the first decade of the 20th century, philosophical dictionaries in all the major European languages had

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[13]Ryle owned this book in the original French. He did not annotate his copy.
[14]Ryle's future colleague, the Oxford pragmatist F. C. S. Schiller, had already written in 1903 that "if one had to choose between Irrationalism and Intellectualism, there would be no doubt that the former would have to be preferred" (106). But Schiller never attained the influence of Bergson and James.

substantial entries for "intellectualism," usually seen as a negative term.

Further reaction to this epistemological form of "anti-intellectualism" followed. In 1914, Russell published a brief critical book on *The Philosophy of Henri Bergson*. In the same year, Susan Stebbing, in her first book, *Pragmatism and French Voluntarism*, critically analyzed and compared the views of Bergson and his followers with those of James and other pragmatists. Writing "from a so-called 'intellectualist' standpoint diametrically opposed to M. Bergson's"—though "not blind to the interest and importance of his work" (Stebbing 1914, v), she argued that assimilation of the French voluntarists to the pragmatists was a mistake, encouraged by the latter's habit to "dub all their opponents, without discrimination, as 'Intellectualists'" (82). The term "anti-intellectualism," she judged, was "made current chiefly by pragmatists," but should be avoided since it "not only conceals differences as vital as any point of agreement, but is so ambiguous as to be practically useless as a label" (113).

As the First World War began, criticism of anti-intellectualism also took on political and social overtones, which would only grow louder in the period between the Wars. The sociologist L. T. Hobhouse, in his 1915 *The World in Conflict*, wrote of Bergson's thought that "it was a philosophy most appropriate to a generation which was rushing headlong on disaster," since "reason . . . was degraded, and instinct . . . was set upon the throne" (51). In 1918, the American "New Realist" Ralph Barton Perry published *The Present Conflict of Ideals*, with the revealing subtitle *A Study of the Philosophical Background of the World War*. In a chapter on "The Revolt against Reason," Perry argued against Bergsonian "irrationalism," that "taking sides against the intellect" could be supported by "the motive of lawlessness" (294, 296). He called anti-intellectualism "a convenient philosophy for impatient men of action" citing "the revolutionary Syndicalists" as having "shown so great a fondness for Bergson" (296).

Here, though, we have moved past a merely epistemological debate focused on the nature of truth and knowledge, to something more relevant to Ryle's concerns. Another shift in the meaning of "intellectualism" and "anti-intellectualism," from the epistemological to the practical, was underway. Perry, looking back in 1918 on the development of anti-intellectualism, wrote that "the intellect is in our day reproached with failure in two respects, in respect of knowledge, and in respect of life. You cannot know with it, or live by it. . . . this formula will cover the different motives which have impelled some one and some another of the anti-intellectualists" (281). Perry's discussion focused on philosophers, such as Bradley, Nietzsche, Bergson, James, and Dewey, but the practical form of anti-intellectualism was a phenomenon not just in philosophy but in psychology, sociology, economics, and political science. All of these fields were marked by the idea—made plausible by successful evolutionary accounts of human origins—that human motivation and animal motivation were fundamentally alike, and that human action was largely the result of non-rational forces such as Bergson's "instinct."

This shift had already begun in psychology by the late 19th century, as can be seen by contrasting two important textbooks of the day. In his 1898 *Manual of Psychology*,[15] G. F. Stout, longtime editor of *Mind* and teacher of both Russell and Moore, took a decidedly intellectualist view of what he called "human intelligence," as distinct from "animal intelligence." He separated the two on the basis of a distinction between "perception," a cognitive state "which immediately depends on the actual presence of an object to the senses," and "that mode of cognition which

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[15]A copy of the second edition of this book is found in the collection of books Ryle donated to Linacre College library. I quote from this edition. (Ryle annotated his copy of Stout's *Manual* in places, and some of his annotations show Stout's influence on his thought, especially concerning the idea of "automatisms" produced by "habit," and "feeling-tone" of sensation. See note 20 for some further discussion.)

takes place through ideal images . . . representations of absent objects which have already been perceived" (251). Since perception allows "learning by experience," we can speak of "animal intelligence," in a limited sense (265). But percepts differ from ideas, which result from "free reproduction" (103–104). Stout explained the "vast gap" between "human achievements, so far as they depend on human intelligence" and "animal achievements, so far as they depend on animal intelligence" in these terms. "Animal activities," he wrote, "are either purely perceptual" or "involve ideas . . . only to prompt and guide an action in its actual execution," whereas "man constructs 'in his head,' by means of trains of ideas, schemes of action before he begins to carry them out. He is thus capable of overcoming difficulties in advance. He can cross a bridge ideally before he comes to it actually" (275).

So, for Stout, while it is not literally true that *all* intelligence depends on prior mental planning, such thinking is characteristic of the higher form of truly human intelligence. This is the sort of position Ryle attributes to "both philosophers and laymen" who "suppose that the primary exercise of minds consists in finding the answers to questions and that their other occupations are merely applications of considered truths" (Ryle 1949, 26).[16] Thus Stout appears to be a model of Ryle's "intellectualist." In con-

trast, Stout's contemporary Wilhelm Wundt, in his 1897 *Outline of Psychology*,[17] rejected "intellectualist psychology" which "attempts to derive all psychical processes, especially the subjective feelings, impulses, and volitions, from *ideas*, or *intellectual processes*," in favor of his own "voluntaristic psychology" in which "subjective activities," especially "volitional processes," have "a position as independent as that assigned to ideas" (Wundt 1907, 12).

Ten years later, the political scientist Graham Wallas opened his 1908 *Human Nature in Politics* by asserting that "any examination of human nature in politics must begin with an attempt to overcome that 'intellectualism' which results both from the traditions of political science and from the mental habits of ordinary men" (15–16). He objected to the "tendency to exaggerate the intellectuality of mankind . . . to assume that every human action is the result of an intellectual process, by which a man first thinks of some end which he desires, and then calculates the means by which that end can be attained" (45). This, he said, is the " 'intellectualist' fallacy" against which "the text-books of psychology now warn every student" (48).

I have not actually *found* a *pre*-1908 psychology textbook referring to this "intellectualist fallacy." But in William McDougall's 1908 *Introduction to Social Psychology*, there is a mention of "the intellectualist fallacy (against which there has recently been so widespread a reaction)" (214–15).[18] In his 1912 *Psychology: The Study of Behaviour*, McDougall argued for the continuity of animal and human motivation on evolutionary grounds and denied that there is a difference of kind, rather than degree, between humans and animals. He presented philosophers as "describing

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[16]John Bengson pointed out to me a very similar passage in Husserl's *Logical Investigations* (also from the turn of the century), which Ryle is sure to have known: "Man's superiority lies in his intelligence. He is not solely a being who brings perception and experience to bear on external situations: he also thinks, employs concepts, to overcome the narrow limits of his intuition. Through conceptual knowledge he penetrates to rigorous causal laws, which permit him to foresee the course of future phenomena, to reconstruct the course of past phenomena, to calculate the possible reactions of environing things in advance, and to dominate them practically, and all this to a vastly greater extent, and with vastly more confidence, than would otherwise be possible. *Science d'où prévoyance*, *prévoyance d'où action*, as Comte tellingly remarks" (Husserl 1922, vol. 1, 199). I have not yet had time to pursue the Husserlian form of intellectualism further.

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[17]Although this particular book was not among the books Ryle donated to Linacre College Library, the collection does include two other works of Wundt: his 1893–95 *Logik* (in German) and his 1896 *Lectures on Human and Animal Psychology* (in English translation).

[18]Ryle owned a copy of McDougall's 1923 textbook, *Outline of Psychology*. He did not, however, annotate that book.

man as a rational animal and attributing all his actions and be-
liefs to reasoned motives and logical operations" (142). But, he
asserted, reality is much different: "much of human behaviour
is the outcome of crude impulses and desires which reason can-
not approve and the will cannot control" (146). Much animal
behavior, on the other hand, can be called "intelligent," since
the word "intelligent" simply means "some degree of modifica-
tion of the innate structure of the mind through experience of
success or failure, pleasure or pain, in the course of purposive
activity" (165).

It might appear that McDougall's anti-intellectualism was
flatly opposed to Stout's distinction between human and ani-
mal intelligence. But to some extent the difference was merely
verbal. In a chapter added to the 1912 edition of *Introduction to
Social Psychology*, McDougall discussed the "intellectualist the-
ory of action which attributes action immediately to 'ideas'"
(323). He commented that "when authors tell us that 'reason' is
the principle of moral action, it is necessary to point out that the
function of reason is merely to deduce new propositions from
propositions already accepted" (325). Reason, he argued, can
have no motivational force; it can tell us what is good but it
cannot create in us a desire for the good, and to be moved to
action we need some such impulsive force. Talk of reason, or
the rational will, or conscience, as the cause of moral conduct
does not "avoid the intellectualist fallacy of assigning intellec-
tual processes as the springs of action" (326).

But McDougall did not deny the existence of processes of rea-
soning, such as Stout's "trains of ideas" through which we can
cross a bridge in our heads before we come to it. Like Stout, he
was willing to allow that there *are* cases in which a rational cal-
culation leads to a decision, so that some human behavior is, in
Stout's sense, exemplary of "human intelligence." However, Mc-
Dougall made two claims. First, processes of reasoning cannot
determine conduct on their own, since they lack the needed mo-

tivational force; hence instinct and impulse are always at work
in us, as much as in animals. Second, by far the largest part
of human behavior is determined purely by instinct, impulse,
and animal intelligence, without in any way being governed by
reason. This is an empirical claim, and McDougall hoped that
the study of psychology could bring about a slow change in this
situation, allowing rational thought to play an increasing role in
our social organization and self-regulation.[19]

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[19]These two sides—explicit guidance by reasoning, or causation by irra-
tional forces and habituation—were often taken to be the only available op-
tions for explaining human and animal behavior. Evidence for this can be
found in the publication of books like Eric Wasmann's 1903 *Instinct and Intelli-
gence in the Animal Kingdom*. Wasmann, an entomologist and Jesuit, responded
to psychologists' talk of "animal intelligence" by arguing that properly speak-
ing there is no such thing, since intelligence is "the power of perceiving the
relations of concepts to one another, and of drawing *conclusions* therefrom,"
including "*the power of abstraction*, of forming *general concepts*," as well as "a *de-
liberative power* which recognizes the relation between means and end, between
a subject and its actions, and, consequently, endows the intelligent being with
self-consciousness and with *rational, free activity*" (28). Wasmann accuses psy-
chologists, who attribute intelligence to a chicken that learns to avoid wasps
after having been stung, of "tak[ing] sensile imagination for intelligence, and
arbitrarily put[ting] . . . syllogisms into the chicken's brain. . . " (14).

A similar limited set of options for the characterization of human action
seems to have governed Bertrand Russell's thought. In a 1928 paper titled
"On the Value of Scepticism," he discussed "the part played by intellectual
factors in human behaviour." Noting that this "is a matter as to which there
is much disagreement among psychologists," he asked "how far are beliefs
operative as causes of actions?" He approached this question by considering
"an ordinary day of an ordinary man's life." Taking as his example an office
clerk, he described much of the man's activity as purely habitual—in his
preparations for the day, in his home life with his wife and children, and
even in his work adding up figures. He contrasted such habitual activities
with policy decisions that have to be made by the director of the firm, and
momentous choices in the man's life such as whether to propose marriage,
or which school to choose for his son's education. In such cases, mere habit
does not suffice, and intellectual factors in the form of beliefs come into play
(284–86). From Ryle's point of view, both Wasmann and Russell have left out
the crucial category of intellectual powers and intelligent actions which are
neither purely habitual nor guided by explicit thought.

Here, I think, is how Ryle would evaluate this dispute between the intellectualist Stout and the anti-intellectualist McDougall. Both psychologists take it that behavior must fall into one of three classes. It is *either* the result of some kind of explicit intellectual process, and so "rational," or "intelligent-in-the-human-sense"; *or* it is completely driven by impulse and instinct, and so completely "a-rational"; *or* it is the result of "learning from experience," and so "intelligent-in-the-animal-sense." This trichotomy constitutes the common assumption uniting intellectualist and anti-intellectualist. Both therefore miss a key Rylean distinction, between "blind habits" and "intelligent powers," inculcated by "widely disparate processes, namely, habituation and education, or drill and training" (Ryle 1945, 223). What Stout called "animal intelligence," and what McDougall simply called "intelligence," would be, for Ryle, merely blind habit, which produces "automatisms, i.e., performances which can be done perfectly without exercising intelligence."[20] But neither McDougall nor Stout have conceptual room for the process of *education* in which a pupil learns a *skill*, in which, as Ryle puts it, "he becomes a judge of his own performance ... he learns how to teach himself and so to better his instructions" (224). The only place they can assign to such skillful practice is on the side of behavior explicitly guided by ratiocination. This traps them in a

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[20]Ryle's terminology of "habituation" producing "automatisms" itself derives from Stout's *Manual*, Book I, Chapter II, §12, "Habit and Automatism"—a section which Ryle annotated fairly heavily (108–12). Stout's discussion of examples such as the expert fencer who cannot afford to act solely from habit (109—Ryle noted in the margin "i.e. whole activity not automatic") and the child learning to walk who achieves "gradual approximations to success" (112—Ryle underlined the last three words) may well have influenced Ryle's thinking about the kind of learning involved in acquiring knowledge-how or skill. However, insofar as Stout thinks of the product of such training as the acquisition of habits which become, as far as possible, automatic, and thinks of human intelligence as involving conscious planning, Ryle would view him as lacking the resources to distinguish between the exercise of an intelligent power (not dependent on intellectual activity) and the workings of habit.

variant form of Ryle's regress: if we "equate rational behaviour with premeditated or reasoned behaviour," we will need to account for the rationality of the activity of reasoning which lies behind the behavior (219). On the picture shared by both "intellectualist" and "anti-intellectualist," either this will be driven by a further process of reasoning and deliberation—and the regress begins—or it will bottom out in something instinctive and a-rational.

On the contrary, Ryle would insist, "ratiocination is not the general condition of rational behaviour but only one species of it" (219). Certainly, rational behavior *is* sometimes guided by conscious thought and deliberation, as when a chess-player "may require some time in which to plan his moves before he makes them" (Ryle 1949, 29). But even in such cases, the chess-player's thinking is itself an instance of skillful intelligent practice, neither the result of mere instinct nor of a blind habit produced by conditioning, but rather the result of proper *education*. So, from Ryle's point of view, the "anti-intellectualist" McDougall, and the "intellectualist" Stout, both worked with the same impoverished conceptualization of what intelligence and reason might be. In this sense they were both "intellectualists": they over-intellectualized the intellect. Ryle's aim was to chart a third option, opening up the space for human behavior to be rational and intelligent in the full sense of being responsive to reasons, without assuming that such behavior must be caused by a process of reasoning from those reasons as premises.

To return to our historical story: by the beginning of the First World War, anti-intellectualism came under criticism in the realm of the practical as well as the epistemological. With the crisis of the Great War and the rise of Fascist and Communist anti-democratic regimes, it came to be blamed for political instability and unrest. Moreover, a number of critics argued that "anti-intellectualists" were guilty of the same "fallacies" they had accused the "intellectualists" of committing. Such critiques

might seem to have the promise of leading towards an alternative vision of intelligence and rationality such as Ryle sought. We will only have space here to consider one such anti-anti-intellectualist attack. But in this case, at least, we'll see that the would-be critic of both intellectualism and anti-intellectualism was unable to shake the fundamental, intellectualist, assumptions that had shaped the entire debate to begin with.

Interestingly enough, this attack came from the same Graham Wallas who had deployed the "intellectualist fallacy" as a term of criticism in 1908.[21] Six years later, Wallas's *The Great Society: A Psychological Analysis* aimed to use modern psychology to understand and rectify the problems of 20th century industrial society. Exhibiting the "attempt to reconcile a current of intellectualism with a current of anti-intellectualism" described by Max Lerner, Wallas wrote that he had moved from "an analysis of representative government, which turned into an argument

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[21]Parallel criticisms of the anti-intellectualists were made by Wallas's colleague at the London School of Economics, the sociologist L. T. Hobhouse, holder of the first chair of sociology in the United Kingdom and the founder of what would become the Royal Institute of Philosophy, and by Hobhouse's student, Morris Ginsberg, in their 1921 books *The Rational Good* and *The Psychology of Society*. Both Hobhouse and Ginsberg argue that "anti-intellectualists" commit fallacies similar to those with which they charge the intellectualists, and both argue for a holistic conception of the human person in which reason and instinctive impulse are aspects of a larger organic unity. Hobhouse, in a striking turn of phrase, accuses the anti-intellectualists of committing the "intellectualist fallacy itself, turned inside out," in assuming that "what is rational in action must be deduced from abstract feeling, independent of impulse" (1921, 32). He here comes close to Ryle in seeking a conception of rationality other than those available within the debate between intellectualists and anti-intellectualists. But his positive account, combining evolutionary psychology and a kind of ethical idealism, is very difficult to understand and continually threatens to backslide into a form of intellectualism in which Reason imposes a structure on a pre-given mass of instinctive impulse. Moreover, Hobhouse and Ginsberg's books were less influential than Wallas's, and unlike Wallas, we have no real evidence that Ryle knew their work. So I have chosen not to discuss them here; but I hope to include their arguments in a longer version of this historical story.

against nineteenth-century intellectualism" to "an analysis of the general social organisation of a large modern state, which has turned, at times, into an argument against certain forms of twentieth-century anti-intellectualism"(1914, v).

Wallas's critique aimed to turn the tables on the anti-intellectualists: "in criticising the Intellectualism of the Utilitarians, modern social psychologists are apt to fall into a kind of anti-intellectualism which involves a curiously similar fallacy" (39). He accused McDougall, in taking the instincts as "the prime movers of all human activity" which "supply the driving power" of the "complex intellectual apparatus of the most highly developed mind" (39), of committing what he called the "two-plane fallacy": "Mr. McDougall does not project his facts as to Reason and Instinct on to one plane" (40). Wallas's argument was that we can consider instinct and reason either from the point of view of our subjective *experience* of action, or from the point of view of our theoretical *explanation* of action. Subjectively, we experience *both* instinctive desire and rational thinking as motivating us to action; and theoretically, we have to consider *both* as elements in a complex explanatory structure. In both cases they are on a par; both can appear as "moving forces" or as "apparatus." It is only by mixing the two perspectives illegitimately that we convince ourselves that only instinct has moving power, with intellectual thinking the machine actuated by that power.

Wallas developed at length the political consequences of anti-intellectualism, which he saw as potentially far more dangerous than those of intellectualism (42–44). He held intellectualism responsible for electoral systems that falsely presuppose all voters to be rational agents, and for laissez-faire economic policies that bring about the misery of the working class. But by representing thought "as the mere servant of the passions," anti-intellectualism set the stage for "the one enormous disaster which hangs over our time," namely "an internecine European war" (44). He blamed "an important revolt against all Logic,

old or new, and in favour of 'instinct' or 'divination'," on "the general spread of Anti-Intellectualism" (217–18). He accused James and Bergson of holding that we must base both belief and action on "Instinctive Inferences" which derive from emotion (223). Arguing that "if Reason has slain its thousands, the acceptance of Instinct as evidence has slain its tens of thousands" (224), he concluded that "if . . . we are forced to choose between Instinctive Inference and Thought . . . we must choose Thought" (227).

By "Thought," he meant "our tendency to carry out the process of reflection or 'thinking'—the process to which we refer when we say that we stopped what we were doing in order to 'think' " (48). Wallas devoted a long chapter to this topic, writing of the need for "an art by which the efficiency of Thought can be improved" (176). He described ways to consciously manipulate ourselves and our environment to enable Thought, even when sub-conscious, to be most effective. His enquiry into an "art of Thought" culminated in a discussion of "Logic in the narrower sense of the term, the processes by which new inferences arise out of our perceptions and ideas." The key question was, "Can those processes . . . be made more effective by conscious effort?" (212). He suggested that the most important thing is to foster the "mental attitude . . . which the experimentalists call 'Problem' (*Aufgabe*) . . . the feeling that we have to find an answer to some question . . . which distinguishes Reasoning from other forms of Thought" (212). The "logical rules," including mathematical principles, which govern Reasoning, he argued, could either be imparted through conscious training, or "'picked up' by our half-conscious observation of our fellows." In either case, adherence to these rules might eventually become "a matter of unconscious habit" (213).

Here we have a criticism of "anti-intellectualists" as committing a fallacy that is supposed to be of a piece with the fallacies of the intellectualists, combined with concern about mounting irrationality in political and social life, and a call for clearer thinking and for the development of methods to foster such thinking in response to these concerns. But, from Ryle's point of view, while Wallas accused intellectualists and anti-intellectualists of parallel fallacies, he himself had retained the same intellectualist conception of rationality that we saw in both McDougall and Stout. He conceived of improvements in our rational lives in terms of improvements in "Thought," whether accomplished through conscious manipulation of the conditions of thinking, or through training ourselves to adhere more rigorously to the rules of Logic. Ryle would reply again that "ratiocination is not the condition of rational behaviour but only one species of it"— that we can exhibit our rationality directly in *any* exercise of an "intelligent power"—of which one, but only one example is the capacity to think clearly and logically (1945, 219).

Eight years after the Great War, Wallas continued his search for methods to improve the efficiency of thinking, as well as his attack on McDougall's anti-intellectualism, in *The Art of Thought*.[22] He laid out his plan in the synopsis:

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[22]Ryle owned a copy of this book. It was given to him by his older sister Effie Ryle, who worked with the Adult School Movement in Great Britain as a teacher of working men and women (Martin 1924, 200, 244, 247, 364). Ryle's copy of *The Art of Thought* bears the inscription "E. Ryle" on its front page, as well as a dedication "An expression of our love and gratitude, from the students of the First Summer Course at Avoncroft, May-July 1926," along with the signatures of thirteen women students. Whether Effie gave this book to him before her death in 1947, or it passed to him afterwards (and so after the composition of "Knowing How and Knowing That") cannot be determined; she may well have decided to give it to him earlier, given his philosophical interests. Moreover, in the latter part of her life, Effie lived with Ryle's mother, his twin sister Mary, and Mary's adopted daughter Janet, in a house in Bucklebury, Berkshire, in which Gilbert also lived when not staying in his rooms at Oxford. (Author's interview with Janet (Ryle) Beckley, 4 November 2015.) Thus, Gilbert might well have had opportunity to read and discuss this book with his sister even before he owned it. The book is annotated, and although it may be that some of the annotations are Effie's rather than Gilbert's (their handwriting was hard for me to distinguish), they

Men have recently increased their power over Nature, without increasing the control of that power by thought. We can make war more efficiently, but cannot prevent war; we can explore the world, but cannot contrive an interracial world policy; and the same want of intellectual control exists, within each nation, in politics, philosophy and art. We require, therefore, both more effective thinking on particular problems, and an improved art of thought, in which scientific explanation may overtake and guide empirical rules. (Wallas 1926, 6)

His purpose was to construct a scientific guide to good thinking. He did not expect much help from psychology: "unfortunately, that section of current psychology which deals with thought may be not only useless but much worse than useless to the would-be thinker" (29). He quoted from McDougall's 1923 *Outline of Psychology*[23] the "paradox of intelligence," "that it directs forces or energies without being itself a force or energy" (440, quoted in Wallas 1926, 32), and argued that psychology was dominated by a mechanical model of "power-driven machinery" in which "'instinct,' or 'emotion,' or 'instinctive emotion' was the 'power' required" and "'intelligence' or 'reason' was the 'machine'" (32).[24]

Wallas repeated his earlier warnings about the dangers of such anti-intellectualist ideas, this time with reference to "the Marxian Communists in Russia and elsewhere" (33).[25] He cited another *Outline of Psychology* published by "the Plebs League,"

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are sufficiently interesting that I will note some of them below. At least some annotations are more likely to be Gilbert's than Effie's—for instance marginal notes referring to James and Plato on pp. 54 and 55, and a point on p. 86, where "e.g. preparation of lectures" is written in the margin next to a discussion of how "one can get more result" by switching between unfinished tasks than by working on one task until it is finished.

[23]Ryle owned a copy of this book, although he did not annotate it.

[24]A marginal note in Ryle's copy reads here "Instinct as 'power', thought as 'machine'," and on the next page, "Breakdown of 'mechanistic conception' in practice."

[25]A marginal note in Ryle's copy reads "Plebs League and Marxian Communists" here.

"British representatives of what the book calls 'the Fighting Culture of the Proletariat'," which "contains many quotations from McDougall's works" (34). Wallas blamed this "mechanist" psychology of thought, as an inert machine "driven by the force of instinct," for the willingness of "the men who now rule Russia" to stamp out "such a 'bourgeois' intellectual process as unbiased reflection before one acts in obedience to one's simplest animal instincts" (35). But, he wrote, the "mechanist" view of human nature, along with "the grossly over-simplified conception of intelligent behaviour to which its use is apt to lead," was now rejected by "some of the best psychologists and physiologists" (35).[26] It had been surpassed by a conception of "the co-operating parts of an organism, each possessing its own drive" (38).[27]

Wallas built on this holistic conception[28] to compare the "art of thought" to a sporting skill, citing the star golfer Harry Vardon, who wrote in his 1912 *How to Play Golf* of his discovery of a grip which "seems to create just the right fusion between the hands, and involuntarily induces each to do its proper work." For Wallas, Vardon expressed here the idea of "an art which enables him, when he grips his brassy, to unify the behaviour

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[26]The lines "some of the best psychologists and physiologists seem to have rejected both 'mechanistic' language" and "grossly over-simplified conception of intelligent behaviour" are underlined in Ryle's copy, with a marginal note reading "Rejection by best psychologists & physiologists."

[27]Wallas followed T.P. Nunn in calling this the "hormic" conception, after the Greek word for "drive." Since McDougall had also used this term for his view of the instincts as "driving forces," Wallas added a two-page footnote explaining why McDougall's "hormism" is not the same as Nunn's. Wallas's "hormism" bears some resemblance to the holistic conceptions found in the writings of Hobhouse and Ginsberg mentioned in note 21 above.

[28]On pp. 36–37 Wallas uses a physiological analogy to elucidate this holistic conception, writing of the phagocytes (white blood cells) in our blood that they "co-operate with the rest of the organism by surrounding and digesting intruding bacteria; but . . . in doing so the phagocytes act as living and behaving things." In the margin of Ryle's copy appears the annotation "Co-operation & Independence of parts of the whole organism."

of certain partially independent elements in his organism; and the thinker who is about to grip his problem has to acquire a similar art" (46–47).[29] Wallas too had set out to write a "How To" book, only it was to contain instructions in how to think. Like Vardon's discovery of his golf grip, this would require a serious "attempt to improve by conscious effort an already existing form of human behaviour" (59), only in this case the "behavior" to be modified consisted of "trains of ideas," in the sense described by Stout.

The crucial question was "at what stages in the thought-process the thinker should bring the conscious and voluntary effort of his art to bear" (79). Wallas presented a four-stage schema of thinking: "Preparation," "Incubation," "Illumination," and "Verification" (80–81).[30] For each stage, he adduced specific strategies for consciously improving the problem-solving process.

Discussing "Preparation," Wallas again emphasized the need to voluntarily adopt "a problem-attitude (*Aufgabe*)," since "our mind is not likely to give us a clear answer to any particular problem unless we set it a clear question, and we are more likely to notice the significance of any new piece of evidence, or new association of ideas, if we have formed a definite conception of a case to be proved or disproved" (85). This stage also requires adhering to the rules of logic in organizing one's train of thought. "Incubation" demands voluntary control in refraining from conscious thought about the problem so that "a series of unconscious and involuntary (or foreconscious and forevoluntary) mental events may take place" (86).

In contrast, the third stage of "Illumination" may seem to fall beyond the scope of such manipulation, since it is commonly

thought of as something like a "Eureka!" moment, and "we can only bring our will to bear upon psychological events which last for an appreciable time" (94). But, this moment is "the culmination of a successful train of association." In the final stretch of this period, the fact that one is on the brink of a solution rises to the fringe of consciousness (98). At that point, "our will can be brought directly to bear on it"—we can try to control the "brain-activity" that we sense is leading to the solution, by consciously holding our attention, trying to avoid distraction, and so on (100–105). Finally, in the concluding "Verification" stage one must again rely on logical rules as one tests and finalizes the proposed solution.

In these and other ways, then, Wallas provided advice for the prospective thinker on how to go about organizing her thought-processes. In spite of his earlier anti-intellectualist stance, followed by his argument that intellectualism and anti-intellectualism are equally flawed, Wallas had moved even further in an intellectualist direction, in Ryle's sense. His effort was to bring as much of the thinking process as possible under conscious, voluntary control. In the following decade, a similar, more explicitly intellectualist project would be advocated by Susan Stebbing, co-founder with Ryle of the journal *Analysis*, and president of both the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association in the early 30s. A close comparison of Ryle's argument with Stebbing's writings shows, I believe, that she was at least one of his most proximate targets. So, perhaps he should have written of "the intellectualist (as I shall call *her*)."

In 1930, Stebbing published the first introductory textbook to deal with the "new logic," *A Modern Introduction to Logic*.[31] Its first chapter was titled "Reflective Thinking in Ordinary Life."[32]

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[29] At the top of p. 47 in Ryle's copy of the book appears the annotation "Art of Thought aims at better *co-ordination* of all our processes."

[30] A number of passages in this part of the book are highlighted with side-lining in Ryle's copy.

[31] Ryle owned the 1933 second edition of this book, and annotated parts of it. He also mentioned it in a review of another logic textbook in 1932, so he must have seen it before obtaining the second edition (Ryle 1932, 235).

[32] The first sentence of this chapter reads "Logic in the most usual and widest

Before her death in 1943 she would author three books for a popular audience developing the theme of the application of logic in day to day affairs—*Logic in Practice* (1934)[33], *Thinking to Some Purpose* (1939), and *Ideals and Illusions* (1941)—as well as a simplified logic textbook, *A Modern Elementary Logic* (1943). In the Preface to *Logic in Practice*, she offered a sober statement of its purpose: we often lack clarity about the content and grounds of our beliefs, but "it must be the desire of every reasonable person to know how to justify a contention which is of sufficient importance to be seriously questioned," and "the explicit formulation of the principles of sound reasoning is the concern of Logic" (vi). But as the political situation became increasingly frightening, Stebbing's introductions took on a more worried and politically charged tone.

In *Thinking to Some Purpose*, asking "are the English illogical?" (1939, 7), she worried over a kind of pride among politicians in the thought that the English "muddle through" in spite of "glorious incapacity for clear thought," and an "unfounded fear of 'pressing conclusions to their logical end.' " (8). Such attitudes, she pointed out, fostered neglect of clear thinking and the "consideration of what is logically relevant to the conclusion to be established" in political debate (9). By *Ideals and Illusions*, written during the Nazi Blitz, her tone had become almost despairing: "during the last twenty-five years many of us in this country have become, for the first time, uneasily aware of failure in our national life; in the last ten years some of us have felt ashamed" (1941, vii). She linked this failure to anti-intellectualism, quoting Santayana: "The intellect, the judgment are in abeyance. . . . Having no responsibility laid upon it, reason has become irresponsible" (1).

Stebbing, who already had spoken from an "intellectualist standpoint" in her first book, in effect developed an explicitly intellectualist version of Wallas's sought for "art of thought." Her work is especially illuminating for Ryle's arguments against the "intellectualist legend." She was an exceptionally clear thinker and writer, yet her position exhibited exactly the kind of circularity and instability that Ryle's regress argument would lead one to expect, with the result that she fell into the "not unfashionable shuffle" that Ryle attacked.

Logic in Practice opened with a striking example, of a sort that recurs in her writings: someone's idle reverie is interrupted by a dramatic event requiring speedy action.[34] A man on a ship is lying awake listening to the sounds of the ocean and the ship's engines, when he hears alarm bells and the shout, "Fire!" What happens? According to Stebbing, supposing he is "not too panic-stricken . . . his thinking will now be purposive; it will be directed to securing his own safety or that of others. He will now actively connect one apprehended fact with another. Once the *fire-situation* is grasped, his thinking will be directed to a practical end; the conditions of attaining this practical end will constitute the problem which his thinking is directed to solving" (1934, 2). She elaborated the example, imagining a committee of inquiry to be set up to determine the causes of the fire; their investigation would also be an example of purposive thinking. While the man's thinking is "practical," and the committee's, "theoretical," this distinction "lies wholly in the purpose for which the thinking is pursued"—the problem to be solved or question to be answered (2–3). The fundamental phenomenon

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sense of the word is concerned with reflective thinking." Ryle underlined the word "reflective" and wrote a question mark in the margin.

[33]Ryle owned this book, though he did not annotate it.

[34]*A Modern Introduction to Logic* opens with a similar example, of a day-dreaming man lying on rocks by the seashore, oblivious to the fact that he is being cut off from the mainland by the rising tide. The man, who is unable to swim, is unaware of this until someone shouts to him. Realizing his quandary, he has to engage in "reflective thinking" in order to find a way of escape. Again, she elaborates the example—the man finds himself to a ledge in a cliff where he discovers a mysterious brick wall, which sets him the theoretical problem of its origin and purpose. These two examples illustrate how "thinking essentially consists in solving a problem" (1930, 3).

is the same: "thinking is directed to an end determined by the nature of the problem" (10).

Crucially for our purposes, Stebbing saw purposive thinking as *characteristic* of intelligence. In *Logic in Practice*, she analyzed "intelligent dealing with a problem" as involving three stages of thinking: "first, the *apprehension* of a situation giving rise to the problem; secondly the *explicit awareness* of the question constituting the initial stage of the problem; thirdly the *formulation* of the conditions to which the solution must conform . . . determined by the total situation." This process involves the formulation of an "intelligent question" and an "intelligent answer," the former respecting "the conditions set by the problem" and the latter discerning "those factors which may be relevant" (3, my emphases). Stebbing's insistence on "apprehension," "explicit awareness," and "formulation" clearly aligned her account of intelligent problem-solving with Ryle's intellectualist target.

In *Thinking to Some Purpose*, Stebbing later said bluntly that "*[i]n so far as* a person is thinking clearly he is intelligent" (1939, 26, my emphasis). The link drawn here between intelligence and thought is confirmed by an index entry "Intelligence, thinking and, 26" referring back to this quotation (243). Stebbing followed this identification of intelligence with clear thought by adding: "A distinguishing characteristic of intelligence is the ability to discern relevant connexions—to put together what ought to be conjoined and to keep distinct what ought to be separated" (26). In a footnote, she explained that "Here 'ought' means 'must, if rational.' This is the logical *ought*." Thus she connected intelligence and *rationality*; and her reference to a logical "ought" is suggestive of the "the explicit formulation of the principles of sound reasoning" which she had specified as "the concern of Logic" in the Preface to *Logic in Practice*. Here again we see Stebbing's intellectualism at work: intelligence and rationality were both linked by her with purposive thinking governed by the laws of logic.

But there is another dimension to "intelligence" mentioned here, the need to recognize *relevant* connections. For the process of intelligent problem-solving summarized in *Logic in Practice*, to be truly effective, the "conditions" must be "selectively attended to," for "to keep to the point is to be guided by relevant considerations alone." Stebbing concluded that "the importance of excluding irrelevant considerations cannot be overstressed" (1934, 3). Focusing on the theoretical problem of the cause of the fire, she illustrated this process at length, to "show how an intelligent person confronted with a problem will proceed to ask questions and guess at the answer, how various answers lead to other questions and further guesses," and so on. This involves the application of logical rules of consistency and inference—as she put it, "such an investigation conforms to certain principles which interest the practical logician" (7). But apprehension of relevance, or "significance for the question at issue," is also essential: "intelligent guessing is controlled by the recognition of certain ascertained conditions as relevant to the solution of the problem" (8). Logic and relevance are both at play in reasoning, and it is the ability to reason which makes us rational beings. She summed up: "Directed thinking in its most highly developed form is reasoning. To be reasonable is to be capable of apprehending a situation as a whole, to take note of those items which are relevantly connected, and not to connect arbitrarily items not apprehended as significant" (10). Here Stebbing once again sounds an intellectualist note, identifying reason*ableness* with a capacity for the kind of reason*ing* involved in "intelligent dealing with a problem."

At this point, we have drawn from Stebbing the materials for a Rylean regress argument to get started. First, for Stebbing, "thinking is an *activity* . . . thinking essentially consists in asking questions and attempting to answer them" (1). But "intelligent dealing with a problem" requires more than knowledge of the facts of the case and awareness of the problem to be solved.

There must be a process of reasoning in which connections are made between various questions and suggested answers, in accordance with the rules of inference and consistency established by logic; and in this process an intelligent selection must be made in a way that responds to conditions of relevance. But the identification and application of logical principles, and the restriction to relevant considerations, are acts which can be carried out intelligently, or not. These both involve problems to be solved, and solved intelligently. Since Stebbing has specified intelligent problem-solving as depending on the three stages of thought identified above—apprehension of the problem, explicit awareness of an intelligent question, and formulation of an intelligent answer—and since she has characterized intelligence as clear thinking, it follows that intelligent problem-solving must depend on antecedent intelligent problem-solving at a higher level; and the regress will take hold.

However, there is another side of Stebbing's thinking, which provides a possible response to this regress, while seemingly moving her closer to Ryle. From Ryle's point of view, though, fully embracing this response would undermine Stebbing's intellectualist identification of intelligence with problem-solving directed by purposive thinking, and of reasonableness with the capacity for reasoning.

Consider first the question of adherence to logical rules of inference and consistency. Here Stebbing fell into the "not unfashionable shuffle" of appealing to implicit knowledge. Concerning the committee investigating the causes of the fire, she wrote that "their thinking was controlled by formal, no less than material conditions. No doubt they were *not explicitly aware* of these formal conditions, but their thinking was effective only in so far as it was in accordance with them" (25–26). But this raises the question, what does it mean for their thinking to be "controlled" by such "formal considerations," and how is this related to the explicit formulation of rules of logic? At times,

Stebbing wrote of this in ways that are reminiscent of Ryle. For example, in her last book, *A Modern Elementary Logic*, she said that "implicit knowledge of logical form," is in place "as soon as we are able to reason, and to demand reasons" (1943, 11). This implicit knowledge allows us to "successfully engage . . . in reflective thinking" in which "our thoughts occur in an orderly way" (10), but it does not yet give us an understanding of "just *why* that special combination of statements was logically right for sound reasoning" (11). The business of logic is to "extract this implicit knowledge from the particular instances in which it is present . . . to state the logical principles to which our reasoning must conform if it is valid" (11). Here "implicit knowledge" might be taken to be Rylean knowledge-how, and Stebbing's discussion might be fitted to Ryle's description of the work of "logicians" who "extract the nerve of a range of similar inferences and exhibit this nerve in a logician's formula" (Ryle 1945, 217). Ryle explained that logicians "can teach it in lessons to novices who first learn the formula by heart and later find out how to detect the presence of a common nerve in a variety of formally similar but materially different arguments." This can be compared to Stebbing's remarks in the Preface to *Logic in Practice* about a "habit of sound reasoning" which "may be acquired by consciously attending to the logical principles . . . in order to apply them to test the soundness of particular arguments" (1934, vii–viii).

But Ryle would accuse Stebbing of a "shuffle," because she equated *what is given in "a logician's formula"* with the *knowledge that was already possessed by intelligent reasoners*. Ryle argued that while "the intelligent reasoner *is* knowing rules of inference whenever he reasons intelligently," nonetheless "knowing such a rule is not a case of knowing an extra fact or truth; it is knowing how to move from acknowledging some facts to acknowledging others" (1945, 216–17). This is why to make the appeal to "implicit knowledge" *is* to *assume* that "knowledge-

how must be reducible to knowledge-that." But, according to Ryle, while a shuffler such as Stebbing might admit that "no operations of acknowledging-that need be actually found occurring," she would be unable to "explain how, even if such acknowledgments did occur, their maker might still be a fool in his performance" (217). Thus, even if Stebbing were successful in imparting propositional knowledge of the rules of logic to the general public through her textbooks and popular books, there would be no guarantee that the result would be a rise in intelligent thinking and action.

But one might still object that Stebbing was well aware of this point. She admitted in the Preface to *Logic in Practice* that "the study of logic does not in itself suffice to enable us to reason correctly, still less to think clearly where our passionate beliefs are concerned" (1934, vii). We have already seen one thing that might be missing, namely the ability to discern *relevance* and to make *relevant connections*. But this is another place where Ryle would see the need for a kind of intelligent knowing-how that goes beyond knowing-that; another place where intelligence cannot be reduced to "directed thinking." In *Thinking to Some Purpose*, Stebbing allowed that "there is no fool-proof method of obtaining answers" to questions such as "How are we to know 'all the relevant aspects'?" (1939, 23–24). In *Logic in Practice*, she said that "apprehension of relevance depends on two quite different factors: knowledge and sagacity" (1934, 10–11). To discern what is relevant to our problem we require a sufficient grasp of the facts of the case—if the fire we are investigating took place on a sailboat, we can rule out guesses concerning the engine malfunctioning. But knowledge is not enough; we also require "sagacity."

Stebbing accepted William James's explanation that "to be sagacious is to be a good observer," on the condition that "we admit that a good observer is one capable of discerning relevant connexions" (10–11). But as an account of "sagacity" as the

quality of mind needed for "apprehension of relevance" this is unhelpfully circular. The question is how one acquires the needed capacity. Ryle would argue that the "good observer" possesses an intelligent power, a skill that has to be acquired through education and training, and which cannot be reduced to "clear thinking," but rather forms its basis. One might see Stebbing as making room for such "intelligent powers" when she distinguished "reasoning," a process of directed thinking, from "being reasonable," a capacity to appreciate a problem situation and the relevance of its factors. This might seem to admit a dimension of Rylean knowledge-how into the thinking Stebbing claims to be characteristic of intelligent dealing with a problem. But for Stebbing to fully admit this would be to give up her intellectualist philosophy of intelligence; she could no longer characterize intelligence in general in terms of "thinking clearly," or analyze all intelligent problem-solving as involving stages of directed thinking.

The example of Stebbing's intellectualism is sufficient to refute the charge that Ryle was merely attacking a straw man—or, in this case, a straw woman. Even more than Stout, or the examples of Frege, Husserl, and Cook Wilson provided by Bengson and Moffett, Stebbing's advice for "practical logicians" seems fitted precisely to Ryle's critique, and it is plausible that reading her work was a direct impetus for Ryle's attack on the "intellectualist legend."[35] Yet it seems clear that Ryle, in presenting his target as the "intellectualist legend," was alluding to a broader

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[35] At least one critic may have associated Stebbing with Ryle's attack on intellectualism. Writing in 1948 in a memorial volume for Stebbing organized by the Aristotelian Society, John Laird accused her of being "an intellectualist in a censurable sense" in *Ideals and Illusions*, on the grounds that she took it to be a "logical point" that "a principle is prior to its application," and maintained that "that as between a principle and the machinery of its application the latter was of little account" (22–23). Laird was no doubt aware of Ryle's presidential address to the Aristotelian Society a few years earlier, "Knowing How and Knowing That," and may have recognized Stebbing as the nameless target of that paper.

controversy that many in his audience would have been familiar with. In also calling his target the "prevailing doctrine," I suggest, he was intimating that in that controversy, in spite of the labels "intellectualist" and "anti-intellectualist," both sides were, in fact, *intellectualist*—both "over-intellectualized the intellect." As I read Ryle, then, he intended to show a way out of this impasse, by enabling us to understand how the genuine exercise of intelligent powers need not depend on the exercise of the power of intellection, yet can rise above mere instinctive impulse and conditioning; or in other words, by enabling us to understand how human beings, as rational animals, can exercise their rationality without engaging in ratiocination, itself merely one species of rational activity. Another way to put this point is to say that for Ryle, knowing-how and knowing-that are both genuine forms of knowledge, with neither reducible to the other, but each in its own way dependent on the other.[36]

But what of the political and social anxieties that marked the debate over "intellectualism" before the Second World War? Why is none of that reflected in Ryle's work, if my reading of this history as relevant to that work is correct? And what would he have to say about it? I can only offer brief speculations here. But I will make two points. First, Ryle wrote "Knowing How and Knowing That" in the immediate aftermath of victory over Fascism. Ryle was demobilized from his position in military intelligence around the beginning of October 1945, and Ryle gave the lecture on the 5th of November, less than a week after delivering his Inaugural Lecture for the Waynflete Professorship at Oxford, "Philosophical Arguments." These two essays were written in a very short time, and reflect an optimistic historical moment, and the relief of a philosopher happy to return to his work.

But second, there is a moral dimension to this work which might suggest a response to the concerns raised by the critics of

anti-intellectualism about the place of reason in public life. Already in his 1940 essay on "Conscience and Moral Convictions," Ryle had compared knowledge of moral principles to "knowledge of how [one] should behave" (188). In "Knowing How and Knowing That," he claimed that his argument should lead "moral philosophers" to "cease to ask such questions as whether conscience is an intuitive or discursive faculty," since "knowing how to behave is not a sort of knowing-that, so it is neither an intuitive nor a discursive sort of knowing-that" (221). Such remarks suggest a treatment of virtue as a kind of knowledge-how, or skill. Thus, one response that Ryle might have made to Stebbing's and Wallas's political concerns would be to say that what is needed is not just clearer thinking, but more virtuous citizens, possessing greater knowledge—although knowledge-how-to-behave, rather than knowledge-that.

By *The Concept of Mind*, however, Ryle had already begun to be suspicious of such an identification of conscience and virtue with a form of knowing-how, writing that "moral knowledge, *if this strained phrase is to be used at all*, is knowing how to behave..." (316). By the end of his career, he would conclude that virtue is not *any* kind of knowledge, whether knowledge-that or knowledge-how—because while virtue can be learned, such learning terminates in *being*, for instance, honest, not in knowing facts about honesty or even in knowing how to deal honestly (when one wants to), both of which can be had by a cheater. Moral learning results "in an improvement in one's heart, and only derivatively from this in an improvement in one's head as well" (Ryle 1972, 330–31). Hence, the above suggestion would need to be modified: what is required is fostering the development of character and virtue—*neither* a matter of greater knowledge-that, *nor* of greater skill, or knowledge-how, but an education of the whole person. Only with such a transformation in place—only with a society of virtuous citizens—could either training in *how* to think, or acquisition of knowledge of *truths*, be of any use.

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[36]It is of course another matter to show how this project is carried out. I attempt this task in Kremer (2017).

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